Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program

Notice of Funding Opportunity Summary Information

	Data Field		
1.	Awarding Agency Name:	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA)	
2.	Agency Contact:	Lanina Clark	
		Lanina.clark@illinois.gov	
		217-782-2027	
3.	Announcement Type:	■ Initial announcement	
		□ Modification of a previous announcement	
4.	Type of Assistance Instrument:	Grant	
5.	Funding Opportunity Number:	1	
6.	Funding Opportunity Title:	Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program	
7.	CSFA Number:	532-00-2476	
8.	CSFA Popular Name:	Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program	
9.	CFDA Number(s):	N/A	
10.	Anticipated Number of Awards:	33-50 grant awards	
11.	Estimated Total Program Funding:	\$1,000,000 per year	
12.	Award Range	\$17,500 - \$30,000	
13.	Source of Funding:	☐ Federal or federal pass-through	
		■ State	
		□ Private / other funding	
14.	Cost Sharing or	□ Yes ■No	
	Matching		
	Requirement:		
15.	Indirect Costs Allowed	□ Yes ■No	
	Restrictions on Indirect	□ Yes ■No	
	Costs	If yes, provide the citation governing the restriction:	
16.	Posted Date:	September 23, 2020	
17.	Application Range:	September 23, 2020 through 5:00 p.m. (CST) on November 30, 2020	
18.	Technical Assistance Session:	Session Offered: □ Yes ■No	
		Session Mandatory: □ Yes ■No	
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Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program

Notice of Funding Opportunity Detailed Information

A. Program Description

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is to advise potential applicants of the availability of grant funds through the Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program (UCPGP). The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) is seeking proposals for projects which will fund the completion of a **Project Plan** meeting the requirements of 35 Ill. Adm Code 365.320, or an equivalent planning document or engineering study which, at a minimum:

- Identifies a project which provides a solution to an identified need for wastewater collection and/or treatment facilities where currently wastewater collection and/or treatment facilities are presently nonexistent or inadequate.
- 2) Provides an analysis of various alternatives which will identify the most cost-effective long-term solution to the need identified in (1) above. The alternatives considered must include, where applicable;
 - i. Construction of wastewater collection facilities for all residences within the project area:
 - ii. Connection of all residences within the project area to an existing wastewater treatment facility;
 - iii. Connection of all residences within the project area to a new wastewater treatment facility; and
 - iv. Land application of wastewater treatment facility effluent.
- 3) The cost-effectiveness analysis provided in accordance with (2) above must include a comparison of the life-cycle costs of alternatives considered for the useful life of those alternatives taking the following into account;
 - a. The cost of constructing all necessary components of the project;
 - b. The annualized cost of operating and maintaining the project over the useful life of the project; and
 - c. The cost(s) of replacing the project at the end of the useful life for all project components.
- 4) Details the existing (if applicable) and proposed user charge system(s) as a result of the project. The cost estimate for the chosen alternative, and associated user charge system(s), must include a reserve account which would support the long term operational, maintenance and replacement costs of all wastewater collection and/or treatment facilities.
- 5) The proposed solution must be in compliance with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations.

Guidance on the information required within a **Project Plan** can be obtained online by clicking on the "Project Plan Submittal Checklist (Wastewater)" on the following webpage:

https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/grants-loans/state-revolving-fund/Pages/state-revolving-fund-forms.aspx

Questions regarding the content of a **Project Plan** and guidance on completing a **Project Plan** can be obtained by calling 217-782-2027 and speaking with the Infrastructure Financial Assistance Section Project Manager on call.

Eligible Applicants must be a "Local Government Unit" as detailed in Section C (page 4) of this NOFO.

<u>Funding will NOT be provided for planning efforts related to projects which are for the rehabilitation of existing wastewater collection or treatment facilities.</u>

Illinois EPA will prioritize and select projects, according to the ranking criteria outlined in Section E.2 of this NOFO.

B. Funding Information

The UCPGP will utilize a portion of Illinois EPA Water Pollution Control Loan Program (WPCLP) Loan Support funds generated from loan repayments. Illinois EPA expects to award a total of **\$1,000,000** and anticipates distributing this amount across thirty-three (33) to fifty (50) awards. Funding will be limited to a maximum of \$30,000 per applicant.

An individual grant will be for a maximum amount based upon the Median Household Income (MHI) of the applicant's service population as a % of the state average MHI as follows:

Applicant MHI vs State Average MHI	Maximum Grant Amount	
Below the state average	\$30,000	
100-110% of state average MHI	\$27,500	
110-120% of state average MHI	\$25,000	
120-130% of state average MHI	\$22,500	
130-140% of state average MHI	\$20,000	
140-150% of state average MHI	\$17,500	
Above 150% of state average MHI	Not eligible for grant funding	

The Illinois EPA may elect to partially fund an application by funding discrete portions or phases of the project scope of work. This could be due to ineligible project components identified in the application or not enough UCPGP funds being available to fully fund the entire project.

Fifty percent (50%) of the grant amount will be disbursed when the grantee provides the Agency a fully executed contract detailing the scope of work and services to be performed by a third party in developing a Project Plan that will meet the requirements of 35 III. Adm Code Section 365.320, or an equivalent planning document or engineering study which satisfies the requirements outlined in Section A (1-5) above. The balance of the grant amount will be provided to the grantee upon the submittal to the Agency of a complete Project Plan meeting the requirements of 35 III. Adm Code 365.320, or an equivalent planning document or engineering study which satisfies the requirements outlined in Section A (1-5) above. The grantee will have two years from the date the Agency sends the grantee a Notice of State Award to submit a Project Plan or equivalent document to the Agency. If at the end of the two-year period a Project Plan or equivalent document has not been submitted to the Agency, all undisbursed grant funds will be returned to Water Pollution Control Loan Program Loan Support fund.

C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be in good standing with the Secretary of the State. Eligible proposals will come from a local government unit within the State of Illinois, as defined in Title 35 of the Illinois Administrative Code Part 365 as follows:

Local Government Unit – A county, municipality, township, municipal or county sewerage or utility authority, sanitary district, public water district, improvement authority or any other political subdivision whose primary purpose is to construct, operate and maintain wastewater treatment facilities, including storm water treatment systems, or public water supply facilities or both. [415 ILCS 5/19.2(g)]

An entity may not apply for a grant until the entity has registered and pre-qualified through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, www.grants.illinois.gov/portal. Registration and pre-qualification are required annually. During GATA pre-qualification, verifications are performed including a check of the federal Debarred and Suspended list and status on the Illinois Stop Payment List. An automated email notification from the GATA Portal to the entity alerts them of 'qualified' status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., inactive DUNS, not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

2. Project Match

The UCPGP does not require a match, but additional funds may be necessary to complete the project as UCPGP amounts may not be sufficient to complete the project. See Section B of this NOFO.

3. Indirect Cost Rate

The grant will not compensate for the indirect costs, overhead, or administrative expenses directly incurred by the applicant associated with applying for this funding opportunity or the completion of the project.

D. Application and Submission Information

Applicants **shall not apply** to the UCPGP until the applicant has pre-qualified through the GATA Grantee Portal, <u>www.grants.illinois.gov/portal/</u>.

1. Content and Form of Application Submission

A complete UCPGP application must include the following:

Applicable forms available on the Illinois EPA website: https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/grants-loans/unsewered-communities/Pages/UCPGP.aspx

- a) Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance
- b) Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program Uniform Grant Budget Template

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- 1) the entire budget for all Planning activity should be provided, with all worksheets completed even if the worksheets are not relevant to the project.
- c) A brief narrative summary of the need for a project. The summary shall provide enough information for the Illinois EPA to evaluate and score the project in accordance with Section(E)(2) of this NOFO. The summary shall also:
 - Identify the need for a project which will present potential solutions for wastewater collection and/or treatment facilities where currently collection and/or treatment facilities do not exist or are inadequate.
 - 2) Identify the total service population to be served by the project.
 - 3) Identify the location(s) of the service population to be served by the project. The location(s) should include the name(s) of the town/city/village where the residents live and/or the unincorporated area(s) where the residents live in order for the Illinois EPA to identify the median household income of the total service population.
 - 4) Provide an address for the central location of the proposed project area.
 - 5) Provide a map showing the general location of all project areas.

The Illinois EPA requires the UCPGP applicants to use the forms provided in the GATA Portal. These forms are designed to allow the Illinois EPA to obtain enough information to properly evaluate the proposed project.

All UCPGP forms that require a signature must be signed by persons authorized by the applicant organization to enter into formal contractual agreements.

Applications must be submitted in an electronic format. Submissions can be made either:

a) By email using the lllinois.Gov File Transfer tool to EPA.LoanMgmt@illinois.gov. Include the phrase "Unsewered Community Planning Grant Application", project title and applicant name in the "Message to Recipient" box. **Do NOT** email files direct, without the file transfer tool, as the Illinois EPA firewall might reject the application. Contact the Infrastructure Financial Assistance Section at (217) 782-2027 regarding the use of the file transfer tool including file size limitations or potential firewall issues.

or

b) By mailing or delivering the application on a CD or USB directly to:

US Postal Service Mailing Address:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Bureau of Water, #15 P.O. Box 19276 Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

Attention: Lanina Clark

Delivery Address:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Bureau of Water, #15 1021 North Grand Avenue East Springfield, Illinois 62702

Attention: Lanina Clark

2. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 C.F.R. § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by Page 5 of 12 – Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program

the federal or State awarding agency under 2 C.F.R. § 25.110(d) is required to:

- a) be registered in SAM **before** submitting its application (Register at: https://www.sam.gov/);
- b) provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and
- c) maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal, federal pass-through, or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal or State awarding agency.

The Illinois EPA shall not make a State award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with these requirements by the application deadline, the Illinois EPA shall determine the applicant as not qualified to receive a State award. The Illinois EPA shall use that determination as a basis to make a State award to another qualified applicant.

3) Submission Dates and Times

UCPGP applications are accepted by Illinois EPA until November 30, 2020. The complete electronic copy of the application must be received at Illinois EPA's Springfield office by 5:00 p.m. (CST) on November 30, 2020 to be considered for funding under the UCPGP.

The Illinois EPA shall not extend the application deadline date. Incomplete and late applications shall; 1) not be considered for funding, 2) not be returned to the applicant, and 3) preclude the Illinois EPA from making an award to the applicant.

The Illinois EPA shall use the date of the email submittal, or the date-stamp applied by Illinois EPA to mailed or hand-delivered applications when received, to determine whether an application has been submitted on or before the deadline.

4) Funding Restrictions

Examples of ineligible activities, tasks, and components that shall not be funded through the UCPGP are provided below. The list is not all-inclusive:

- Land acquisition Costs
- Project Design Costs
- Project Construction Costs
- Planning efforts related to projects which are for the rehabilitation of existing wastewater collection or treatment facilities.

Costs incurred prior to the effective term date of the grant agreement or after the grant agreement term ends are ineligible.

Grantees shall not use any subcontractors, outside associates or consultants in connection with any services covered by a grant agreement unless specifically authorized by the Illinois EPA. Grantees shall use procurement procedures that reflect applicable local and State of Illinois laws and regulations relating to any sub agreements for the performance of grant projects.

E. Application Review Information

1) Application Eligibility

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If the answer to **any** of the following Administrative Criterion or GATA Pre-Qualification Criterion questions is **No**, the application shall not be considered for funding.

Administrative Criterion	Yes	No
Application meets all Administrative Criterion below and is eligible for Merit-Based Review		
	Yes	No
All application fields completed with the information requested and boxes checked, as applicable.		
Application submitted electronically to the EPA.LoanMgmt@illinois.gov address or delivered in an electronic format to Illinois EPA Headquarters (see page 5 for address).		
Application was received by the Illinois EPA by 5:00 p.m. (CST) on November 30, 2020.		
Included a Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance with completed signature block.		
Included an Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program Uniform Grant Budget Template with all pages and completed signature block		
Included a brief narrative summary of the project with all necessary information as detailed in Section D(1)(c) of this NOFO.		
GATA Pre-Qualification Criterion		No
Did the applicant meet all of the following pre-qualification requirements through the GATA Grantee Portal, www.grants.illinois.gov/portal/ , by 5:00 p.m. (CST) on November 30, 2020?		
	Yes	No
Has a valid DUNS number		
Has a current SAM.gov account		
Is not listed on the federal Excluded Parties List		
Is in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State		
Is not listed on the Illinois Stop Payment list		
Is not listed on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list		

2) Criteria, Review and Selection

All UCPGP applications shall be reviewed for completeness, technical merit, cost effectiveness, and adherence to the competitive grant evaluation criteria described in this NOFO. Applications found to be complete shall undergo a comprehensive, merit-based review performed in compliance with GATA Legislation 30 ILCS 708 and 2 CFR 200 Uniform Requirements. The merit-based review must evaluate the applications against the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria, Prioritization Scoring System and Selection Process

Complete applications shall be reviewed by an Evaluation Panel consisting of Illinois EPA, BOW, Infrastructure Financial Assistance Section staff who will rank and prioritize applications in accordance with the scoring system below:

1) The following points will be awarded based on the median household income (MHI) of the applicant's service population as a percentage of the statewide average MHI:

Points	MHI as % of Statewide MHI
200	Below 50%
175	50 – 50.99%
150	60 – 60.99%
125	70 - 79.99%
100	80 - 89.99%
75	90 - 99.99%
50	At or Above 100%

2) The following points will be awarded based on applicant's service population.

Points	Service Population	
100	Less than 1,000	
75	1,000 – 2,499	
50	2,500 – 9,999	
25	10,000 - 34,999	
10	35,000 - 74,999	
0	At or Above 75,000	

3) The proposed project will provide wastewater collection and/or treatment to any area within Illinois EPA <u>Areas of Environmental Justice Concern</u>: **100 Points**.

UCPGP funds will be awarded per this NOFO starting with the highest ranked (most points) project first. Available funds will be awarded to the next ranked project on the list until all available funds have been exhausted. If two, or more, projects receive the same amount of points, the project(s) serving a higher population will be ranked above any project serving a lower population.

4) Appeal Process

An appeal process is available to applicants and other interested parties; however, appeals are limited to the Illinois EPA evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the following address: Illinois EPA, Attn: Infrastructure Financial Assistance Section, Bureau of Water, 1021 N. Grand Avenue, Mail Code #15, P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276 and must be received within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published by the Illinois EPA on Grants.Illinois.gov. The written appeal shall include at a minimum the following: the name and address of the appealing party, identification of the grant, and a statement of reasons for the appeal. Illinois EPA shall acknowledge receipt of an appeal within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date the appeal was received.

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When an appeal is received, the execution of all grant agreements that Illinois EPA intends to make under this NOFO shall be stayed until the appeal is resolved, unless the Illinois EPA determines the needs of the State require moving forward with execution of the remaining grant agreements. The State need determination and rational shall be documented in writing.

Illinois EPA shall respond to the appeal within 60 days or supply a written explanation to the appealing party as to why additional time is required. The appealing party must supply any additional information requested by Illinois EPA within the time period set in the request. The Director of the Illinois EPA may appoint one or more Appeal Review Officers (ARO) to consider the grant-related appeal and make a recommendation to the Director of the Illinois EPA or designee for resolution. The ARO shall make a recommendation to the Director of the Illinois EPA or designee as expeditiously as possible after receiving all relevant, requested information. In determining the appropriate recommendation, the ARO shall consider the integrity of the competitive grant process and the impact of the recommendation on the Illinois EPA. The Illinois EPA shall resolve the appeal by means of written determination, which shall include, but not be limited to: review of the appeal, appeal determination, and rationale for the determination.

5) Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates

Illinois EPA's Infrastructure Financial Assistance Section shall present a summary of all applications received to the Chief of the Bureau of Water and the Director of the Illinois EPA. This summary shall confirm that the NOFO was followed and will include the findings and recommendations of the Evaluation Panel, including application rank and funding recommendations.

Action by Illinois EPA	Anticipated Date
Notify applicants that their application was received.	Within 21 days of application deadline
Notify unsuccessful applicants their application was not selected for funding.	Within 60 days of application deadline
Send a "Notice of State Award" to selected applicants for signature.	February 28,2021
Send a grant agreement to selected applicants for signature.	April 15, 2021
Provide a fully executed grant agreement to the grantee.	June 15, 2021

The Illinois EPA shall send an e-mail to the applicant acknowledging receipt of the application. Applicants shall be notified, at this time, if their application was not considered for funding due to an incomplete or late application submittal or if they were not pre-qualified in the GATA Grantee Portal by the application deadline.

Following a decision of intent to award, the Illinois EPA is required by GATA to conduct a fiscal and administrative risk assessment and programmatic risk assessment of the applicant. Additional information may be required at that time from the successful applicant. For the applicant to remain eligible for the award, it must provide the requested information within the time specified by the Illinois EPA. The Fiscal and Administrative Risk Assessment Questionnaire is available on the GATA Portal. The Programmatic Risk Assessment, provided by Illinois EPA, evaluates the applicant's ability to successfully carry out the terms of Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program and assesses four risk categories: 1) quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards; 2) history of performance; 3) reports and findings from audits performed on prior awards; and 4) the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements

F. Award Administration Information

1) Notice of State Award (NOSA)

The Illinois EPA shall issue a Notice of State Award (NOSA) to the successful grant applicants. The NOSA shall specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the Fiscal and Administrative and Programmatic Risk Assessments. The NOSA must be accepted by an authorized representative before a grant agreement can be sent to the applicant. A NOSA is not an authorization to begin project activities or incur costs.

Once all the final requirements have been completed, the grant agreement between the Illinois EPA and the applicant shall be sent to the applicant to sign and return. Once the agreement is fully executed by the Illinois EPA, a copy shall be returned to the applicant.

2) Administrative, State, and National Policy Requirements

The terms and conditions of the award shall be specified in the NOSA and the grant agreement.

No grantee shall receive a grant or any other State or federal assistance that would provide 100% or more of the eligible project costs.

If the grantee of a UCPGP grant is at any time offered any State, federal, or local grant or any other funding source, to assist in the payment of expenses for which the UCPGP grant payment has been issued, the recipient shall reimburse the State of Illinois for any UCPGP grant funds used to pay expenses or offered to be paid under another grant or funding source.

Each grantee must agree to comply with all applicable federal and State requirements. **This includes Uniform Administrative Requirements, 2 C.F.R. § 200 and GATA.** These can have a significant impact on the costs and complexity of a project. UCPGP grantees will be expected to submit signed assurances that they will comply with all State and federal mandates, including:

a) Illinois Prevailing Wage Act; 820 ILCS 130/: The Illinois Prevailing Wage Act requires the payment of prevailing wages for all construction funded in whole or in part with State funds, including funds passed through to private firms. Grantees shall comply with all requirements of the Prevailing Wage Act, including but not limited to, inserting into all contracts for construction a stipulation to the effect that not less than the prevailing rate of wages as applicable to the project shall be paid to all laborers, workers, and mechanics performing work under the award and requiring all bonds of contractors to include a provision as will guarantee the faithful performance of such prevailing wage clause as provided by contract. Grantees will be required to report on Prevailing Wage Act compliance. If your project involves construction and/or equipment installation, go to https://www2.illinois.gov/idol/Laws-Rules/CONMED/Pages/prevailing-wage-act.aspx for more information.

In the grant agreement, the grantee shall be required to:

 Certify that it does and shall comply with all provisions of the federal Internal Revenue Code (26 USC 1), the Illinois Income Tax Act; 35 ILCS 5/, and all rules promulgated thereunder, including withholding provisions and timely deposits of employee taxes and

- unemployment insurance taxes.
- Certify that it does and shall comply with the reporting requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006; PL 109–282, September 26, 2006, 120 Stat 1186 with respect to federal Awards greater than or equal to \$25,000.
- Certify that it shall adhere to the applicable Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements; 2 C.F.R. 200.
- Certify that it and its sub-grantees shall: (i) be registered with the federal SAM if seeking
 an Award that is partially or fully paid by federal funds and registered with the State
 equivalent of SAM; (ii) be in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State; and (iii)
 have a valid DUNS number. It is Grantee's responsibility to remain current with these
 registrations and requirements. If Grantee's status with regard to any of these requirements
 change, or the certifications made in and information provided in the Uniform Grant
 Application changes, Grantee's must notify the Grantor in accordance with ARTICLE XVIII.

3) Reporting

All projects require quarterly reporting of progress and a final project evaluation and report. Quarterly progress reports shall include both a <u>Periodic Financial Report</u> and a <u>Periodic Performance Report</u>. These reports need to be sent to the Illinois EPA's Infrastructure Financial Assistance Section staff at:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Bureau of Water, #15 1021 North Grand Avenue East P.O. Box 19276 Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276 Email: lanina.clark@illinois.gov

Phone: (217) 782-2027 (Lanina Clark)

All projects require a final project report. The grantee shall submit to the Illinois EPA, by the date specified in the grant agreement, a report explaining the execution of the project and evaluating the project's success. The report shall document the project tasks and summarize the findings, costs, and benefits of the project.

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

If you have any programmatic questions regarding the UCPGP, this NOFO, or the UCPGP application, contact the Illinois EPA's Infrastructure Financial Assistance Section staff at:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Bureau of Water, #15 1021 North Grand Avenue East P.O. Box 19276 Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

Email: <u>lanina.clark@illinois.gov</u> Phone: (217) 782-2027 (Lanina Clark)

If you have fiscal and administrative questions regarding the Uniform Grant Application, the Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program Uniform Grant Budget Template, Internal Controls Questionnaire (ICQ), or pre-qualifying through the GATA Grantee Portal, contact the Illinois EPA's Fiscal staff at:

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Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Fiscal 1021 North Grand Avenue East P.O. Box 19276 Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

Email: max.paller@illinois.gov Phone: (217) 558-3386

H. Other Information

Additional information about UCPGP can be found on Illinois EPA's website: https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/grants-loans/unsewered-communities/Pages/UCPGP.aspx

Illinois EPA is not obligated to make any grant award as a result of this NOFO.

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